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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [JO](#)  
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE ON HAMAS OFFICIALS - GOJ KEEPS THE DOOR  
SHUT

REF: STATE 195195

Classified By: Ambassador David Hale for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Ambassador delivered reftel demarche to Foreign Minister Khatib during a December 6 meeting. Khatib told the Ambassador that Jordan would not be receiving Palestinian Prime Minister Haniyyeh or any other Hamas figures. Khatib said that Government spokesman Nasser Joudeh's December 4 statement -- that Haniyyeh was not banned from entering Jordan but that there were no arrangements for Haniyyeh's visit to Jordan during his current Arab tour -- was adequate, but felt that the GoJ needed to come up with a better explanation for domestic consumption. COMMENT: This view is not shared at the Palace or the General Intelligence Directorate, which are comfortable with Joudeh's line. END COMMENT.

¶2. (C) Khatib told Ambassador that Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Feisal told him in confidence during the Arab League Ministerial in Cairo that Saud's recommendation to King Abdullah bin Abdelaziz was not to receive Haniyyeh; however, the Saudis were in an awkward spot as Haniyyeh wants to perform Umrah.

#### An Unpopular Policy

¶3. (C) The King is firm on his arm's-length approach to Hamas, but the GOJ pays a domestic political price for keeping Haniyyeh out. For example, on December 6 Foreign Minister Khatib was asked in parliament about the prospect of a Haniyyeh visit, and provided an answer that tracked with Joudeh's. We expect parliament and the local media to continue pressing Jordanian ministers on this issue.

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